United Nations

Centre against Apartheid

Notes and Documents

25/91 December 1991

CONSULTATIONS WITH ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENTS AND OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (GENEVA, 4-5 NOVEMBER 1991)

STATEMENT OF ACTION

[*Note:* **The Special Committee against Apartheid held a two-day meeting of consultations with anti-apartheid movements and other non-governmental organizations at Geneva on 4 and 5 November 1991. The meeting was a follow-up of the consultations held in October 1990. It was attended by more than 40 participants from 38 anti-apartheid movements and other non-governmental organizations. Also present were representatives of national liberation movements and specialized agencies of the United Nations. The consultations culminated with the adoption of a statement of action, which is reproduced herein.**]

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STATEMENT OF ACTION BY THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENTS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ADOPTED AS A RESULT OF THE CONSULTATIONS

The Special Committee against Apartheid held consultations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and anti-apartheid movements at the Palais des Nations at Geneva on 4 and 5 November 1991 to review developments in South Africa since October 1990 and to assess progress towards the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid. Representatives of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), as well as two special guests from these organizations also participated in the consultations.

In particular, the consultations provided an opportunity for the participants:

(a) To analyse in depth the recent developments in South Africa towards the eradication of apartheid and, especially, how far measures taken by the South African authorities have gone towards meeting the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid, which was adopted by consensus;

(b) To review the international reaction towards these developments, especially the role of sanctions in influencing and encouraging this process in South Africa;

(c) To share experience and exchange views on the activities and role of anti-apartheid movements and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) relating to the ongoing political process in South Africa;

(d) To examine ways and means by which to strengthen the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid, in particular, to promote and assist its new two-track approach of continued pressure on South African authorities until a democratic Constitution is in place; and of increased assistance to the anti-apartheid forces.

Participants renewed their support for the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa (General Assembly resolution S-16/1) in which States Members of the United Nations had established an internationally agreed basis for a political settlement in South Africa and pledged to campaign to popularize the positions set out in the Declaration.

In reviewing the situation, participants recognized that, while South African authorities had taken some positive measures towards the eradication of apartheid, such as the repeal of the Group Areas Act and the Land Acts as well as the amendment of the Population Registration Act, further steps need to be taken to create a climate for free political activity.

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In this connection, the participants noted with concern the failure of the South African authorities to release all political prisoners including those in the homelands as called for under the United Nations Declaration and as agreed to with the ANC under the Pretoria Minute.

It was also noted that the South African authorities have failed to curb the unprecedented wave of violence that has gripped the country in recent months. They have failed to deal effectively with the partiality of the security forces and, in particular, with regard to the role of various groups, including mercenaries, in fomenting and perpetrating violence in the townships.

Also, participants expressed concern with regard to the agenda followed by the authorities as manifested by its covert funding of organizations that have been linked to the violence in townships, as well as by its constitutional proposals aimed at preserving white political and economic power.

Participants agreed that the existing South African regime could not be entrusted with the governing of the country during the process of negotiation and transition and, therefore, recognized the urgent need for an agreement on transitional arrangements. In this context, participants welcomed the signing on 14 September 1991 of the National Peace Accord as an important step towards ending violence.

They also welcomed the convening of the Conference of the Patriotic/United Front, in Durban on 25 to 27 October 1991 as a major step towards uniting and strengthening the anti-apartheid democratic forces for the constitutional process including the establishment of an elected Constituent Assembly.

In the light of these developments, participants called for the prompt convening of the All-Party Pre-Constituent Assembly Conference as agreed at the Patriotic/United Front Conference.

At the international level, participants expressed great concern about the growing inclination towards the premature lifting of sanctions that would remove the pressure on South African authorities required to achieve a democratic transformation. They called on the international community to honour its obligations towards the fulfilment of the consensus United Nations Declaration and to cease forthwith the unilateral lifting of sanctions against South Africa, in particular, the continued violation of the arms embargo.

In the meantime, participants called for increased assistance to the anti-apartheid democratic forces and to the disadvantaged sections of the South African society.

Towards a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa

The NGOs and anti-apartheid movements participating in the consultative meeting agreed upon the need for sustained campaigning to ensure a genuine end to apartheid and the creation of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa based on the fundamental principles set out in the United Nations Declaration, in particular one-person one-vote on a single common non-racial electoral roll. This would specifically involve the following steps:

(a) The immediate holding of an all-party conference/pre-constituent assembly meeting under the auspices of a neutral convener on the modalities of setting up an elected constituent assembly, on an interim government/transitional authority, on the constitutional principles within the framework outlined in the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid, as well as the role to be played by the international community during the transition;

(b) The formation of an interim government/transitional authority during the period of transition to a democratic order;

(c) The establishment of an elected constituent assembly to draw up a democratic constitution based on the fundamental principles set out in the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid;

(d) The holding of free and fair elections and the installation of a government based on the democratic Constitution in a united South Africa.

The participants, fully cognizant of the significance of their continued role in enhancing the democratic process in South Africa, reaffirmed their commitment to sustain their solidarity campaign against apartheid and to this end agreed on the following framework as a common plan of action.

Promotion of the political process leading to the eradication of apartheid

The participants recognized the threat posed to the democratic transformation of South Africa by political repression and violence, especially state sponsored violence, and agreed on the need to expose all such dangers; they also agreed to exert pressure on their governments and intergovernmental organizations to take effective action; and in particular to campaign for:

(a) The immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners including those on death row; and in the bantustans;

(b) Exposing any violations of the National Peace Accord and to ensure that it is implemented fully;

(c) An end to the State harassment of the non-racial trade union movements including the quashing of the conviction of the COSATU "4";

(d) The complete dissolution of all covert and clandestine police and security force structures, and the immediate and verifiable expulsion of all foreign mercenaries;

(e) The cessation of all political trials;

(f) An end to all restrictions on the right to peaceful demonstration and organized political activities;

(g) The unconditional return of political exiles.

Maintenance of pressure

The participants recognized the major role that sanctions had played in compelling the apartheid regime to accept the need for a negotiated political settlement and the essential role sanctions will continue to play in ensuring a genuine end to apartheid and the creation of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. Taking into account the positions expressed by the national liberation movements and the recent related decisions of the Ad-hoc Committee on Southern Africa of the OAU (OAU) meeting at Abuja, Nigeria and the Commonwealth heads of government Meeting at Harare, it was agreed that pressure through sanctions should be maintained and any adjustments be concomitant with the establishment of an interim government/transitional authority and to the agreement on a new Constitution.

The participants agreed:

(a) To call on anti-apartheid forces worldwide to campaign for the maintenance of economic sanctions and boycotts in order to secure the early establishment of an interim government/transitional authority;

(b) To send messages of support and encouragement to the parties in the Danish Parliament which oppose the premature lifting of sanctions by the European Community and to encourage the Parliament to maintain this position until an interim government/transitional authority is in place;

(c) To encourage the maintenance of sanctions by States and municipalities in the United States which significantly reduce the impact of the premature lifting of United States federal sanctions;

(d) To appeal to the authorities in Central and Eastern European countries, in view of their disturbing tendencies to develop all-round relations with South Africa to refrain from breaching international isolation of South Africa; to encourage NGOs to work towards this end;

(e) To condemn those banks that have violated United Nations policy on financial sanctions and to campaign to prevent any further bond issue and other bank loans, credit facilities and new capital inflows to South Africa, including access to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank;

(f) To campaign for the maintenance of all restrictions on the supply and shipping of oil and sanctions in the nuclear field including imports of South African uranium until a democratic government is in power in South Africa;

(g) To promote the strict implementation of the United Nations arms embargo and all associated military sanctions including the embargo on the export of arms by South Africa until a democratic government is in power in South Africa;

(h) To appeal to the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to carry out an investigation into the South African nuclear weapon capability;

(i) To campaign to ensure that cultural, academic and sports contacts with South Africa in no way result in the strengthening of apartheid institutions but assist the democratic culture of the country.

Provision of assistance

1. Opponents of apartheid

The participants recognized that it was essential that maximum support be provided by the international community to the national liberation movements and all those struggling to secure the democratic transformation of South Africa. In particular it was agreed to campaign:

(a) To popularize and mobilize support for the decisions of the Patriotic Front Conference held on 25 to 27 October 1991;

(b) To mobilize support for popular campaigns in South Africa to prevent the authorities from unilaterally restructuring the economy in order to perpetuate white privilege and black impoverishment, such as, the current campaign against value added tax (VAT);

(c) To mobilize political and material support for the national liberation movements;

(d) To mobilize financial support to meet the needs of returning exiles and released political prisoners;

(e) To urge United Nations Member States to honour their obligations under the United Nations Declaration to step-up all-round support to the opponents of apartheid, including ongoing assistance to national liberation movements as well as other organizations playing a positive role in the process of change in South Africa, such as trade unions, religious organizations, human rights bodies and the democratic media;

(f) To support initiatives which are endorsed by the democratic forces of South Africa designed particularly to prepare for the transitional period and for a post-apartheid South Africa such as human resource development and other programmes seeking to redress the consequences of apartheid, including the provision of adequate housing, primary health care, and non-racial educational services.

2. Front-line States and the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC)

The participants recognized that the Front-line and the SADCC States continue to require all possible assistance to overcome the consequences of years of South African aggression and destabilization. They agreed to urge United Nations Member States to put pressure on South Africa to stop all forms of support to Renamo in Mozambique. To this end, they also agreed to urge Member States to honour their obligations under the United Nations Declaration "to render all possible assistance to the front-line and neighbouring States to enable them to rebuild their economies, which have been adversely affected by South African acts of aggression and destabilization".

Information campaigns

The participants recognized that there had been a concerted campaign by the Pretoria regime and by its international allies to the effect that apartheid is dead. In order to counter the effects of this campaign it was agreed:

(a) To organize educational and information campaigns which, whilst acknowledging the changes which have taken place, demonstrate that South Africa is still an apartheid state, that "grand apartheid" in the form of the bantustans continues as do numerous apartheid laws; and that the black majority still has no vote;

(b) To educate public opinion as to the massive deprivation and glaring socio-economic inequalities which exist in South Africa as a direct consequence of the policies of apartheid;

(c) To expose the illegal and covert actions of the apartheid regime in South Africa, which demonstrate that it cannot be entrusted with the governing of South Africa during the process of transition to a democratic order;

(d) To mobilize public opinion, parliamentarians and governments in support of the establishment of an interim government/transitional authority until a new Constitution is in effect;

(e) To similarly mobilize support for the establishment of an elected constituent assembly to draw up a new Constitution as the basis for a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.